

## **1-15 Core construction stymies trucking industry**

**Genelle Pugmire - Daily Herald | Posted: Monday, June 7, 2010 12:35 am**

Singer Paul Brandt wrote a little ditty a while back called "Convoy." A portion of the lyrics reads, "Come on and join our convoy -- ain't nothin' gonna get in our way. We gonna roll this truckin' convoy 'cross the USA." Brandt hadn't met up with the Interstate 15 Core project and he didn't know that nighttime would be a trucker's worst nightmare along the 24-mile stretch.

"We have been big proponents of the project," Executive Director of the Utah Trucking Association David Greer said. "But it's going to be horrible for our industry."

Greer said that although the trucking industry is resilient and very high tech (with satellite tracking nowadays), the next two to three years is going to be a guessing game for the more than 7,000 trucks that come through the Utah County I-15 corridor. They also can't wait to see the results.

"I-15 is a key corridor," Greer said. It has been estimated that 70 percent of all food goes through Utah. The I-15 corridor is a major connector for Mexico and Canada and has also been dubbed the NAFTA Corridor because of its north/south connection.

"Utah is a tremendous center for distribution," Greer said. "We're a major trucking hub. This is going to be tough on the industry, but we are going to bite the bullet."

To help the trucking industry move along I-15 as smoothly as possible, a special website, [itrucking.utah.gov](http://itrucking.utah.gov), has been set up to alert companies and individual drivers when and where there will be closures, wait times and detours.

"We know that any project on I-15 will be an inconvenience for truckers," I-15 Core project spokeswoman Heather Barnum said. "The i-Truck program is a service tailored to the trucking association. It's an advantage to residents too, to know we're reaching out to the trucking industry as well."

Trucks will typically travel in off-peak times. At the same time, the Core project is also trying to do a lot of work at night, and that, Barnum said, runs into truckers on the road.

"We're not just talking Utah truckers," Barnum said. "We've already seen some positive signs from our outreach program. There is a lot of use of the website."

One of the great concerns for truckers is the few options they have for alternative routes between Spanish Fork and Lehi. That means there may be some trucks forced to use surface streets to get around closures coming as soon as next week.

"It's hard for us to anticipate what roads they're going to use," Barnum said. "We feel that when trucks are taking our advice, traveling adjustments shouldn't have that much delay for them. We are trying to minimize the inconvenience for the public."

Greer said there isn't a community in the state that isn't served by trucks bringing in commodities; some come from as far away as Florida and Maryland.

"Our big fleets and big carriers aren't going to let surface street use happen," Greer said. "However, independents you're going to find using them."

If trucking is how America moves, then the i-Truck program and the I-15 Core project are going to make sure the coming days of construction will be as easy and free flowing as possible.

I-15 Construction activity:

### **Provo to Spanish Fork**

- Work will begin on the off-ramp from southbound I-15 to Provo Center Street as crews prepare for freeway widening. The ramp will remain open, but motorists should expect traffic shifts on the ramp through the month of June.
- A temporary traffic signal will be installed at the intersection of the southbound I-15 off-ramp and Provo Center Street. The signal will be operational before the flyover bridge from southbound I-15 to eastbound Center Street is removed in July.
- Pile driving operations continue for temporary bridges along I-15 southbound at the Union Pacific Railroad and UTA tracks and at 820 North and 2000 North in Provo (2000 South in Orem).
- Drainage installation and subgrade work is underway along the southbound shoulder of I-15 north of Provo Center Street. Crews are working 24 hours a day.
- Tree and topsoil removal and clearing of the right of way continue in the shoulder areas along northbound I-15 between University Avenue in Provo and University Parkway in Orem.
- June 4-7: Northbound I-15 will be reduced to one lane between 920 South and 600 South in Provo for barrier placement, striping, and sound wall removal.
- Construction of temporary bridges over 600 South and 920 South in Provo is scheduled to begin mid-June.
- Pile driving is expected to begin at 600 South the week of June 7.
- Work to clear and remove trees from the right-of-way along the northbound (east) side of I-15 between University Avenue and 600 South in Provo is nearly complete.

### **Springville to Spanish Fork Area**

- Widening of the northbound side of I-15 between University Avenue in Provo and Spanish Fork Main Street continues.
- Crews are tentatively scheduled to shift the northbound lanes of I-15 between 2700 North in Spanish Fork and state Route 75 at night June 10 and between S.R. 75 and state Route 77 at night on June 15.

- Crews are building the new ramp from I-15 southbound to U.S. Highway 6. This work will continue for at least a month. Crews will be working along the shoulders and median of I-15 in this area.
- Construction of a temporary bridge on I-15 over Main Street in Spanish Fork is scheduled to begin the week of June 7.
- Crews are building the new ramp from I-15 southbound to U.S. 6. This work will continue for at least a month.
- Drainage installation and subgrade work continues along the northbound shoulder of I-15 between Spanish Fork and Springville and in the in-field of the existing U.S. 6 ramp through the month of June.

### **Orem area**

- Glare screen installation will begin June 7 at the interchanges of 1600 North and 800 North in Orem. These screens are installed on top of the median barriers to protect drivers and work area crews from headlight glare and to improve work area traffic flow.
- I-15 will be reduced to three lanes in each direction between 1600 North and 800 North in Orem while crews continue to remove the median barrier, reconstruct the median area and restripe the new lane configuration.
- Clearing of trees and debris continues between University Parkway and 1600 North as crews prepare for I-15 widening.
- The southbound exit-only lane from 1600 North to 800 North has been closed for the duration of the project. Please use extra caution and give way to drivers in this area as the normal traffic pattern for merging onto and off of I-15 southbound has changed.

### **Lehi to Lindon**

- Beginning the week of June 7, crews will install steel bridge supports for the center bridge columns at the bridges at 500 East in American Fork and Sam White Lane. This work will be performed during the day. Nearby residents and businesses should expect noise and vibration with this activity.
- The West Frontage Road between Storrs Avenue and 100 East in American Fork remains closed for relocation of water and gas lines. This closure will be in effect 24 hours a day through mid-July. Motorists can use 400 South and 1100 South as alternate routes.
- Crews continue removing trees and widening the shoulders along both sides of I-15 from 500 East in American Fork to 200 South in Lindon.